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Saint Helena

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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I. General

1. Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha is a Non-Self-Governing Territory administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and consisting of the islands of Saint Helena, Ascension and the Tristan da Cunha group. The basis of the current relationship between the United Kingdom Government and its Non-Self-Governing Territories is enshrined in the constitution of each Territory. The British Overseas Territories Act 2002 grants the right of British citizenship to "British Overseas Territory citizens".

2. Situated in the South Atlantic Ocean, approximately 1,900 kilometres from Angola and 2,900 kilometres from Brazil, Saint Helena is a small island of volcanic origin. The island, where the Territory's capital, Jamestown, is located, is the largest of the Territory, with an area of 122 square kilometres. Ascension lies 1,200 kilometres to the north-west of Saint Helena, and Tristan da Cunha and the other small islands lie approximately 2,400 kilometres to the south of Saint Helena. The Territory comprises a total land area of 412 square kilometres.

3. The uninhabited island of Saint Helena was discovered in 1502 by the Portuguese navigator Juan da Nova. In 1633, the Netherlands claimed the island but did not occupy it. The British East India Company proceeded in 1658 to colonize and fortify the island, which was subsequently settled. Slaves were brought from Africa, including Madagascar, and the Far East. Chinese and some Indian indentured labourers were brought to work on the island. Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled to Saint Helena from 1815 until his death in 1821. Saint Helena became a British Crown Colony in 1834.

4. The inhabitants of Saint Helena are known as "Saints" or "Saint Helenians".[1] A 2008 census put the de facto population at 4,077, compared to 5,008 in 1998. Following the reintroduction of granting of British citizenship to Saints in 2002, the island experienced an exodus which subsequently slowed down.[1] While it is believed that most people desiring to leave have already done so, emigration could escalate once more if the economic growth predicated on the anticipated access to the island by air does not materialize. Another problem facing Saint Helena is the fact that the majority of Saints returning to settle on the islands are of retirement age, thus exacerbating the already heavily skewed age profile of the population. Approximately 17 per cent of the population resides in Jamestown. The official language of Saint Helena is English.[1]

II. Constitutional, legal and political developments

5. A new Constitution was enacted in the Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Constitution Order 2009, and entered into force on 1 September of that year. The new Order changes the name of the Territory from "Saint Helena and its Dependencies" to "Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha". Executive

Note: The information contained in the present paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Further details are contained in previous papers posted on the United Nations website www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization/docs.

[1] Information provided by the administering Power, 29 December 2009.

Authority is vested in Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, but is exercised on her behalf by the Governor, who is appointed by the United Kingdom Government. However, the ability of the Governor to act inconsistently with the wishes of elected Councillors is curtailed in comparison with the previous constitution. The current Governor is Andrew Gurr.[2]

6. The current Constitution provides protection for fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, including protection of the right of life, protection from inhumane treatment, protection from slavery and forced labour, protection of the right to personal liberty, protection of prisoners, the right to marry, children's rights, freedom of conscience, right to education, and freedom of expression, assembly and association.

7. The Legislative Council comprises the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, three ex officio members (the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and the Attorney General) and 12 elected members. The Executive Council, which is presided over by the Governor, consists of the ex officio members and five of the elected members of the Legislative Council. The ex officio members have no vote in either body, whereas previously the Chief Secretary and Financial Secretary were voting members.

8. Elections are held by secret ballot, at intervals of not more than four years, by universal suffrage for those aged 18 years and over. The most recent general elections were held on 4 November 2009, in which 12 nominees (6 for each constituency) were duly elected. The new Legislative Council met formally on 13 November and elected the five elected members of the Executive Council and Chairs for each of the eight Council Committees. The Legislative is due for dissolution on or before 13 November 2013, with the next general election taking place shortly thereafter.

9. The new Constitution contains enhanced provisions for ensuring the independence of the judiciary from the legislative and executive organs of Government. The judicial system comprises a Court of Appeal, a Supreme Court and such subordinate Courts (currently a Magistrates' Court and provisions for Coroner's Enquiries into sudden deaths) as may be established by Ordinance. There remains a final appeal to the Privy Council of the United Kingdom in prescribed circumstances.

10. In May 2009, at the Caribbean Seminar on Decolonization held in Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Helenian Councillor, Tony Green, said that the islanders saw themselves as part of the United Kingdom and that the Territory strongly believed that it should not be categorized as a British Overseas Territory. Saint Helena wished to have a new partnership with the administering Power that might be modelled on Saint Pierre et Miquelon, the French Overseas Territory. The new partnership, in his view, would be through constitutional change. He pointed out the need to clarify the relationship between Saint Helena and its then two dependencies, Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha, and to ensure greater accountability by Saint Helena's elected representatives for local affairs.[3]

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[2] *St. Helena Government, News*, http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/news.php/38/new-constitution.

[3] See the United Nations decolonization website at www.un.org/Depts/dpi/decolonization.

III. Budget

11. Due to a shrinking tax base, partly owing to migration and an ageing population, Saint Helena is heavily dependent on the United Kingdom and other external sources for funding. Budgetary support from the United Kingdom is used to meet essential public services and to subsidize the dedicated shipping service of the Territory. Much of the capital investment is funded through the Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union.

12. According to the information provided by the administering Power, total budgetary aid, development assistance and shipping support from the United Kingdom Government was £26.10 million for the 2010/11 fiscal year, compared to £22.8 million during the previous period, representing a 14.7 per cent increase. The current three-year 2011-2013 aid package was approved in 2010, following a visit to Saint Helena by DFID representatives. It was decided during that visit to review the 2012 and 2013 bids in 12 months' time, with a view to adjusting the recurrent bid settlement. During the current year, the British Government has announced its intention to proceed with procurement of the Saint Helena airport project, subject to four strict preconditions being met (see para. 24).

13. A new sustainable development plan is being developed and will be published in early 2012. In the meantime an interim plan is being developed based on strategic plans and policy priorities and will be linked to a policy framework.

IV. Economic conditions

A. General

14. The economy of Saint Helena depends largely on financial assistance from the United Kingdom, which makes up about 70 per cent of annual budgetary revenues. The local population earns income from fishing, raising livestock and selling handicrafts.

15. According to the administering Power, the first phase of a public sector modernization programme, which is being funded by DFID, has been completed, and the inception report endorsed, in principle, by the Saint Helena Executive Council. That enabled the drafting of a project memorandum for submission to DFID to secure funding for the second phase of the programme, which began in the first quarter of 2009.

B. Development

16. Saint Helena is also eligible to receive funds from the European Union. The Territory's allocation from the tenth European Development Fund (2008-2013) is €16.63 million. On Saint Helena, the Fund's allocation will allow for the development of a safer landing facility (including breakwater, slipway and a sheltered landing area) and improved sea defences in James Bay. On Ascension island, it will be applied towards road upgrading. On Tristan da Cunha, it will be used for further harbour improvements, investigation of alternative energy potential,

water upgrading, waste management, electricity distribution infrastructure and capacity-building related to the management of the lobster processing plant.

17. Development aid from the Department for International Development is provided within a three-year framework (see A/AC.109/2008/6, para. 24). In addition, the Department has funded a major infrastructure review that has enabled a comprehensive plan to be developed that identifies Saint Helena's infrastructure requirements over the next 10 to 20 years.

18. In March 2008, a disaster-management capability review, fully funded by DFID, was undertaken in Saint Helena by the United Kingdom Government. In February 2009, a European Union-funded disaster management consultant visited Saint Helena to consolidate the work of the island Disaster Management Committee. The consultant made further recommendations in his final report, which are now being carried forward.

C. Fisheries and agriculture

19. Fisheries are an important sector in Saint Helena's economy. There are a total of 29 fishing boats with commercial licences, but only a few of them fish regularly. The local fishermen sell their catch to the Saint Helena Fisheries Corporation. Fish purchases for the first half of the financial year 2010/11 were 136.1 metric tons, compared to 306.1 metric tons during the same period the previous year. The volume of fish exported during the period from April to June 2010 was 57.8 metric tons, compared to 78.9 metric tons over the same period the previous year. There has been no take-up of foreign fishing licences since the financial year 2006/07, although those licences have in the past contributed up to 20 per cent of all local revenue.

20. Saint Helena has developed a reputation for the high quality of its coffee and fish. The island's product is considered one of the finest premium coffees in the world. Owing to problems in the coffee sector, however, very little coffee has been exported recently. Its wild fish were the first to receive organic certification from the Soil Association, the leading campaigning and certification organization of the United Kingdom for organic food and farming.

21. With regard to farming, the 2010-2011 Agricultural Support Programme provided support in the following areas: irrigation, land cultivation, seed potato, production infrastructure, banana and coffee production, pig and poultry production and pasture. The overall aim of the agricultural improvement scheme is to sustain and, where possible, increase agricultural production.

D. Transport and utilities

22. Access to Saint Helena is provided by the RMS Saint Helena, which serves Saint Helena, Ascension, Walvis Bay, Namibia and Cape Town, South Africa. Saint Helena's only port, Jamestown, provides good anchorage, although it lacks safe landing facilities that would allow passengers of large cruise vessels to come ashore in all types of weather. One of the activities proposed by Saint Helena for the tenth European Development Fund relates to safer landing facilities at Jamestown wharf. It is hoped that the construction of a jetty in Rupert's Bay, in connection with air

access development, will enable the separation of cargo and passenger operations in the future, with the former being transferred largely to Rupert's Bay.

23. Saint Helena does not have an airport. The nearest airstrip is located on Ascension. In July 2010, the Secretary of State for International Development announced that the Government of the United Kingdom would be willing to finance an airport on Saint Helena, subject to strict preconditions being met, including the negotiation of acceptable price, the mitigation of cost risks and time overruns, the approval of the airport design using a shorter runway and the undertaking by the Saint Helena Government of reforms necessary to open the island's economy. In this connection, the Saint Helena Government and the Department for International Development were working in 2010 on a memorandum of understanding, setting out actions to realize benefits from the development of air access in Saint Helena. According to the administering Power, an airport should make the island self-sustainable. If an airport were to be constructed, the United Kingdom Government would withdraw its subsidy from the RMS Saint Helena, leaving it to the Saint Helena Government to decide whether to retain the vessel in service.

24. The Territory has approximately 168 kilometres of paved roads (Saint Helena 118 km, Ascension 40 km, Tristan da Cunha 10 km) and 30 kilometres of unpaved roads (Saint Helena 20 km and Tristan da Cunha 10 km).

25. Saint Helena has two local radio stations, as well as satellite TV stations rebroadcast terrestrially. Ascension has one local radio station and receives relays of broadcasts from Saint Helena. Broadcasts from the British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS) are available, as well as TV services for the United States military. Tristan da Cunha has one local radio station and receives BFBS TV and radio broadcasts. There are around 1,100 Internet users in Saint Helena and Ascension.

26. Under the DFID-funded Electricity Distribution Project, work has been under way to upgrade and extend the island's electricity distribution system, including through the installation of additional wind turbines. Saint Helena's wastewater systems have also been upgraded under another DFID-funded project.

E. Banking and credit

27. In December 2008, new ordinances on financial services and money-laundering came into force. The bills aim to ensure that Saint Helena complies with international obligations, while safeguarding Saint Helenians from fraudulent financial service providers.

F. Tourism

28. In 2010, DFID approved £1.2 million for the Tourism Development Project on Saint Helena. The Project provides, among other things, for enhanced marketing and promotion, improved destination management, and community-driven projects linked with tourism.

29. The administering Power believes that a new airport is the best way to bring new financial opportunities to the island and promote tourism. At present, about 2,000 visitors per year make the trip to Saint Helena by ship. With an airport, it is estimated that more than 29,000 tourists will visit the island each year. The rugged

natural beauty of the Territory, its rare wildlife and historic sites, such as Napoleon's tomb, are expected to attract visitors.

V. Social conditions

A. General

30. Measured by international standards, Saint Helena is a middle-income country with few signs of real material poverty. This is largely the result of the all-encompassing government safety net, which guarantees everyone a minimum standard of living, and of social networks which encourage the distribution of income among kin, most notably in the form of remittances.

31. The ageing population of the Territory, with 22 per cent of the island over 65 years of age, has created an increasing need for substantial investment in a new elderly care programme. To this end, Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal Community Care Centre, funded by DFID, was opened in 2008. A revised policy for home care support took effect in mid-November 2010. The policy allows older people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, and provides for the support to assist them with the activities of daily living. In the period under review, there were 90 people aged 65 and over receiving income-related benefits.

32. A new Child Welfare Ordinance was enacted on 18 December 2008 and came into force in March 2010. The new legislation changes the strategic management structure for safeguarding children and young people on Saint Helena. New policies and procedures have been developed for child protection and safeguarding the welfare of children. The new legislation fulfils Saint Helena's obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

33. In January 2009, the Executive Council approved a new health and social services strategy for Saint Helena, entitled "Focusing on the future", to guide the development of the Public Health and Social Services Department until 2012. DFID has agreed to inject almost £2 million into the project over its duration, subject to the achievement of certain milestones throughout its implementation.

34. There is one general hospital in Jamestown and five health clinics serving people living in rural areas. In addition, two units cater to clients with challenging behaviour problems and learning disabilities.

B. Employment

35. The public sector remains the dominant employer in the Territory. The Saint Helena Government has been looking at standards of practice in employment in anticipation of the economic changes that are expected to ensue if construction of an airport goes ahead. Legislation was drafted for provisions relating to employment and the rights of employees and to create a framework for the enforcement of such rights. These rights relate to a written statement of particulars; provision for working time regulations; unfair dismissal; entitlement to unpaid parental leave and unpaid leave to care for dependants; and provisions for a minimum wage. The bill was passed by the Legislative Council in 2010.

36. With a view to correcting anomalies and addressing staff retention that would also encourage/facilitate career management, in April 2010, the Saint Helena Government introduced a revised system of fairer pay scales. As a result of successfully meeting the training needs of the unemployed, their number on the Community Work scheme has been reduced from 176 in 2003, to 18 at the end of 2010.

37. Offshore employment has steadily increased and, with it, remittances to the Territory. Approximately one quarter of the island's workforce is employed on Ascension, in the Falkland Islands or in the United Kingdom. Remittances passing through the Government of Saint Helena Finance Department during 2009/10 amounted to £811,145, compared to £845,280 during 2008/09. This amount does not necessarily represent the total remittances for that year, since direct transfers can be made to the Bank of Saint Helena.

38. The majority of contracts for offshore employment are for unaccompanied workers, resulting in a significant social burden and dislocation of families. In addition, the loss of trained staff to better-paid offshore employment makes it necessary to bring in a range of internationally recruited staff in a number of sectors. The Saint Helena strategic review for the past decade showed that remittances from offshore workers were not sustainable and spelled out serious consequences if people were not put at the centre of development, stating that no community could prosper if its biggest export was its people.

C. Education

39. Education is compulsory and free for children between 5 and 16 years of age. There are currently four schools in operation, comprising three all-through primary schools (for pupils aged 3 to 11 years) and one secondary school for students aged 11 to 18 years. Post-compulsory-aged students opt for either United Kingdom-accredited academic or vocational courses.[4] Since September 2009, Distance Learning opportunities have been included in the curriculum of secondary school. The Education Department is also responsible for the training and retraining of the public and private sector, through the provision of an Adult and Vocational Education Service.

40. The Education Department continuously addresses staff attrition issues, falling pupil rolls and enabling the greater use of existing resources in order to continue to improve educational standards. Retaining qualified, experienced staff continues to be a challenge. Since 2007, overseas territories' citizens have qualified for the home student fee rate at English universities.

41. The Education Ordinance 2008 improved the legal framework for providing suitable education to children and also raised the compulsory schooling age from 15 to 16 years.

[4] See www.prunesedu.edu.

D. Environment

42. Saint Helena has an environmental conservation programme aimed at preserving endangered species and the diversity of habitats. The Saint Helena Government actively pursues compliance with its commitments under the Environment Charter but resource constraints have impeded progress in some areas.

43. The Overseas Territories Environment Programme, funded jointly by DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the Government of the United Kingdom, approved one project for Saint Helena in 2010, entitled "Illustrated Field Guides to the Flora of Saint Helena". Nine further project bids were submitted for the eighth Overseas Territories Environment Programme bidding round in the financial years 2011/12. On Ascension island, it approved an endemic plant conservation plan. In Tristan da Cunha, efforts will focus on the control of alien mice and plants at the Gough Island World Heritage Site.

44. A further rock fall protection project, costing £3.475 million, funded by DFID, should be completed by the end of February 2011. The project has aimed at mitigating rock falls from the cliffs above Jamestown and protecting the lives and property of its inhabitants.

VI. Relations with international organizations and partners

45. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha are associated with, but not part of, the European Union. In November 2010, the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and Saint Helena established the South Atlantic Territories Cooperation Forum to work together on common projects in areas such as procurement, health, transportation links, climate change, agriculture, tourism, public works, conservation and public sector workforce development.

VII. Ascension

A. General

46. Ascension was discovered by the Portuguese in 1501 and "found" again on Ascension Day in 1503 by Alphonse d'Albuquerque, who named the uninhabited island. As at 31 March 2010, the population of the island exceeded 800. Ascension covers an area of 90 square kilometres and is of volcanic origin.

47. In 1815, when Napoleon was a prisoner on Saint Helena, a small British naval garrison was stationed on Ascension. The island remained under Admiralty supervision until 1922, when it became a dependency of Saint Helena. From then until 1964, it was managed by the Eastern Telegraph Company (renamed Cable and Wireless in 1934). In 1964, in view of the plans to establish British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Composite Signal Organization stations, an Administrator was appointed.

48. During the Second World War, the United States Government built the Wideawake airstrip on the island. In 1957, a United States Air Force presence was re-established and the airstrip and ancillary facilities enlarged. It is now the south-

east tracking station for the United States Air Force Eastern Range Test Proving Ground. In 1982, it became the intermediate stop for Royal Air Force flights to and from the Falkland Islands. In 2003, British and United States officials signed the Wideawake Agreement, which opened up the airstrip to civilian charter traffic. The Agreement was extended for a five-year period in 2008, additionally providing for non-international scheduled flights.

B. Constitutional and political status

49. The new Constitution for the Territory removed the notion that Ascension is a "dependency" of Saint Helena; but the islands remain part of a single territory — sharing a Governor, Attorney General, and superior courts. The new Constitution enshrines protection of fundamental rights and freedoms and contains enhanced provisions to guarantee the independence of the judiciary from the legislative and executive organs of government.

50. For the first time, the existence of an Island Council is recognized in the Constitution, with detailed provision to be made by local ordinance. A new Council was elected in October 2008. Due to the lack of sufficient candidates, the 2010 general elections for the Council were postponed until after February 2011.

51. In June 2010, the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf denied a claim for a continental shelf area beyond 200 nautical miles submitted by the United Kingdom to the Commission, in respect of Ascension island, in accordance with the provision set out in article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.[3] The Commission concluded that the volcanic pinnacle on which Ascension rests was too slender to generate rights to an extended zone of the submerged continental shelf. The United Kingdom Government is considering its response.

C. Economic and social conditions

52. Following a joint meeting between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Ministry of Defence team and the Ascension Island Council regarding the right of abode and property ownership on Ascension, in January 2006, the Government of the United Kingdom announced that there would be no change in its policy and that rights of permanent abode and property ownership would not be granted on Ascension. The issue for the United Kingdom Government was one of contingent liabilities that could fall on British taxpayers.[3] Legislation underpinning a land and business policy was enacted in June 2008. It aimed at providing a clear and transparent means of determining the allocation and use of land, as well as a framework for the operation of businesses on the island.

VIII. Tristan da Cunha

A. General

53. The Tristan da Cunha island group comprises four islands: the main island, Tristan da Cunha; Gough; Inaccessible; and Nightingale. Tristan da Cunha, a round

volcanic island with an area of 98 square kilometres, is the most remote inhabited island in the world. As at 2008, its population was 269. Its closest neighbours are Saint Helena, 2,334 kilometres to the north, and Cape Town, South Africa, 2,778 kilometres to the east. The only settlement on the island is the capital, Edinburgh of the Seven Seas. A team of South African meteorologists is based on Gough. Inaccessible and Nightingale are uninhabited.

54. Tristan da Cunha's entire population was evacuated to the United Kingdom for a period of 18 months when the volcano last erupted in 1961, but returned in 1963. Following a series of earth tremors in the summer of 2004, the British Geological Survey was engaged to monitor seismic activity, and provide regular reports, with a view to evacuation preparedness. The DFID-administered contract with the Survey ended in 2006 and was not renewed. A volcanologist visited Tristan da Cunha in 2009 for three months to make a volcanic hazard assessment and work with the Tristan community on a disaster-preparedness plan. She made a return visit to the island from December 2010 to February 2011.

B. Constitutional and political status

55. Executive authority for Tristan da Cunha is exercised by the Governor of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. A resident Administrator is appointed by and reports to the Governor. The Administrator is advised by an Island Council, led by the Chief Islander and comprising eight elected members (including at least one woman) and three appointed members. Elections are held every three years. All registered voters over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Under the new Constitution, the Governor continues to have legislative authority over Tristan da Cunha, but for the first time, is constitutionally required to consult the Island Council before making any laws.

56. Tristan da Cunha has its own legislation, but Saint Helena law applies to the extent that it is not inconsistent with local law, insofar as it is suitable for local circumstances and subject to such modifications as local circumstances make necessary. As a last resort, the laws of England and Wales apply. There is one full-time police officer and two special constables. The Administrator also serves as the Magistrate.

C. Economic and social conditions

57. Tristan da Cunha's economy is based on traditional subsistence farming and fishing. Rock lobster is sustainably fished and exported to the United States, Japanese and Australian markets. Work is in progress to access the European Union market. Tourism from occasional passing cruise ships, and the sale of commemorative coins and stamps, also brings the island significant income. Government income from these sectors is used to fund health, education and other government services. A few islanders supplement their earnings by providing accommodation and guided tours to the infrequent visitors and from the sale of handicrafts. Traditional small-scale farming is also an essential part of life on the island.

58. In February 2008, the lobster processing plant on Tristan da Cunha was destroyed in a fire. Combined with the collapse of the island's main cargo crane two

months later, the incident had a serious impact on the economy of the island and on employment. A new gantry crane was sourced and installed by early January 2009 and is now fully operational and a new lobster plant was completed in July of the same year.

59. Access to Tristan da Cunha is only possible by sea and is mainly provided by two vessels operated by the South African company Ovenstone, which holds the fishing concession for Tristan da Cunha lobster, and by the SS Aghulas, a South African research vessel which services their weather station on Gough Island. Between them, they visit Tristan da Cunha 10 times a year, operating a passenger and freight service. The journey between Cape Town and Tristan da Cunha takes around seven days.

60. The harbour can only be used when weather and sea conditions are favourable, with cruise ships often unable to land passengers. It is not deep enough for visiting ships, so they must anchor offshore and offload passengers and cargo via small boats and rafts, weather permitting. The harbour is vulnerable to sea storms and sustained new damage in June 2010. DFID recently agreed to fund further repairs to be carried out between January and April 2011. The United Kingdom Government recently funded the construction of a new post office/museum and police station on the island. The post office and museum will host a number of tourism services, which will generate additional income for the island.

61. Following the installation of an improved telephone network early in 2007, Tristan da Cunha now has improved telecommunications with the outside world. The administering Power funds the line rental charge for this service. Telephone services are reliable and available to all households and an Internet café offers islanders limited access to the Internet.

62. According to information provided by the administering Power, over the past decade, Tristan da Cunha has spent substantially more than it has earned, leading to a serious drain on its reserves. Inexperience in financial management, and the proportionally high amount of capital expenditure needed to maintain such a remote and isolated community, were all contributing factors. There continues to be a number of increasing pressures on the Government budget, not least the cost of medical services, including offshore medical treatment for islanders.

63. In order to increase and broaden existing revenue sources, and to further reform the public service, in 2009, the Island Council set out broad strategies to secure the island's financial future. According to the administering Power, even with these reforms, the island will very soon become insolvent, unless further drastic measures are taken.

64. DFID funds the positions of a resident doctor and Head of Public Works, plus annual dental and biennial optician visits. It has also recently agreed to fund a resident Chief Executive Officer, whose priority will be to reform government and improve performance across the public sector.

65. Since the United Kingdom Overseas Development Administration withdrew expatriate British teachers in the early 1990s, the education sector on Tristan da Cunha has been in decline, and the current standard is considered poor. Pupils leave school at the age of 16 and tend to work in Government or the fishing sector. They have no opportunity to proceed to further education unless they go abroad. The current staff are by their own admission poorly trained. There are no trainee teachers

in the pipeline. In September 2009, a DFID-sponsored education adviser began a two-year posting on the island.

66. Tristan da Cunha is successfully implementing a number of conservation projects, with help from its partners, such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds which, in 2008, sponsored a conservation adviser for a one-year posting. Overseas Territory Environmental Programme projects include efforts to remove invasive species from uninhabited islands in the Tristan da Cunha group, and also includes studies on the feasibility of eradicating introduced rodents. Tristan da Cunha also has a Biodiversity Action Plan to help it to meet its commitments under the relevant Convention.

IX. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

67. Information on political and constitutional developments regarding the status of Saint Helena is reflected under section II.

B. Position of the administering Power

68. Information on the general position of the United Kingdom was included in the August 2010 report of the Secretary-General entitled "Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism" (A/65/330, annex I). On 4 October 2010, the United Kingdom made a statement before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

69. According to the record of the Fourth Committee meeting (A/C.4/65/SR.2), the representative of the United Kingdom, inter alia, reiterated the British Government's established position that its relationship with its Overseas Territories was a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of each Territory to determine whether it wished to stay linked to the United Kingdom or not. Although the situation in each Territory was different and some Territories were at a more advanced stage of development than others, the United Kingdom would continue to work with all the Territories, as appropriate, in areas such as good governance, political and economic development and transparency, enhanced security and reduced vulnerability to natural and non-natural disasters.

70. The speaker went on to say that the relationship between an Overseas Territory and the United Kingdom was enshrined in the constitution of each Territory. A recent constitutional review process with a number of the Territories had resulted in updated provisions of existing constitutions, such as human rights provisions, and those relating to good governance and the respective roles of the Governor and locally elected politicians.

71. Furthermore, good governance had been the central theme in all constitutional talks with the Territories. The British Government had no wish to micromanage its relationship with its Overseas Territories and was committed to allowing each Territory to run its own affairs to the greatest degree possible. But that brought with it responsibilities on the part of each Territory. Where the United Kingdom felt that

a Territory was failing to fulfil the international obligations which extended to it or developments in a Territory gave rise to other concerns, the British Government would not hesitate to raise it with the Territory's Government and to intervene where necessary.

X. Action by the General Assembly

72. On 10 December 2010, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 65/115 A and B, based on the report of the Special Committee transmitted to the Assembly (A/65/430) and its subsequent consideration by the Fourth Committee. Section IX of resolution 65/115 B concerns Saint Helena. Under the operative paragraphs of that section, the General Assembly:

> "1. *Stresses* the importance of the entry into force of the Territory's new Constitution in 2009;
>
> 2. *Requests* the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter of the United Nations, and, in that regard, calls upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;
>
> 3. *Requests* the administering Power and relevant international organizations to continue to support the efforts of the territorial Government to address the Territory's socio-economic development challenges, including unemployment, and limited transport and communications infrastructure;
>
> 4. *Calls upon* the administering Power to take into account the unique geographical character of Saint Helena while resolving as soon as feasible any outstanding issues related to the airport construction;"